

The Cleveland Museum of Art. First Annual Report on

THE WORK OF THE EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT *****

1917

The work of the Educational Department began in November, 1915, eight months before the formal opening of the Museum. It was a paving of the way for future activities. The present work with informal groups, clubs, schools, and libraries is a direct development of connections established in those first months.

Actual personal contact with an eager and somewhat impatient public began early in June. The work of this first summer was, as the previous work had been, very largely introductory in character. Groups of various types were conducted through the galleries. With some the most that could be hoped was that they might have, after their visit, a slight conception of what a museum is, and a hint of the meaning of the words "museum collections". Others came with well defined and specialized interests. Children were to be found in large numbers and by the summer's end many had developed something of a proprietary interest in the Museum.

In the Fall the work soon fell into fairly well defined channels. Clubs considering an Art subject on the day of their meeting in the Museum, have used the Conference Room for such meetings on an average of nearly twice a week since October. They have ranged from groups of women who had left their washing and other household duties for a glimpse of objects suggestive of widely separated "home lands" to those who approached the collection with very different experiences of foreign travel and study.

A definite co-operation with the Public Schools was made possible by a statement which was sent through the schools outlining briefly plans for work, and which gave permission for classes to visit the Museum during regular school hours. This was signed by the Superintendent of Schools and by the Director of the Museum. An average of considerably more than a class a day has come to the Museum to study special collections in connection with their school work or to see what possibilities the Museum presents for work of this kind. During March classes aggregating more than 1200 children visited the Museum with a definite purpose in view.

One of the most interesting developments is an arrangement completed in January by which a class is sent to the Museum each day for a drawing lesson from Museum material, given by the district supervisors with the assistance of the class teachers. This work is supplemented by a visit to the gallery with a view to following up the work done in the class room.

Under the head of Extension Work the Museum has been sending a series of traveling exhibits to the Branch Libraries through the winters of 1915 and 16. The exhibits consist of such art material as pottery, Japanese dolls, lace, and a second class of objects - products of a primitive African tribe, in which the interest aroused is more from the standpoint of geography or ethnology than from the standpoint of fine arts. This latter group of material will lead directly to The Children's Museum which is one of the future developments planned for. These exhibits are accompanied by pictures and maps and by a "diary" descriptive of the objects in a given exhibit and outlining their background. These diaries are prepared as a possible aid to the Librarian in presenting the material to those interested, particularly to children.

Lectures have been held during the Winter for members of the Museum. There have also been lectures open to the public under the joint auspices of the Museum and the Normal School, the University, the McBride Lecture Fund, and such organizations as the Ceramic Worker's Guild, and the Geographical Society. Gallery talks have been given each Sunday during the Fall and Winter. An attempt has been made to deal with the various types of collections the Museum houses.. Special Saturday afternoon programmes for children have placed the juvenile element distinctly in the foreground on those days. The children have been given travel lectures, stories connecting where possible with Museum material - talks in which a definite group of pictures of objects was the subject for the afternoon. Perhaps the most popular month was one devoted to American history leading directly to collections in the Colonial Room. These programmes brought forth storms of enthusiasm from a very cosmopolitan audience of widely different ages and types. Moving pictures have

been used to a considerable extent with slides, and dealt with in this connection, have proved to be a most interesting phase of a much discussed problem.

The general spirit of the Educational Department is that of an experimental station. The work has been, and must be well into the future, somewhat tentative, subject to changes which results as they show themselves, shall indicate. It must be further modified by outside suggestions for wider usefulness. To such suggestions the Educational Department hopes to be constantly awake, ready to utilize them wherever possible.

June 5, 1917

To the Director, Sir:-

I have the honor to submit the following first annual report of the Educational Department of The Cleveland Museum of Art for the year ending June 7th, 1917 -

Work previous to opening of the Museum

The ground work of the Educational Department was laid during the Winter previous to the opening of the Museum. All subsequent development has been the direct result of the activities of these eight months. The time was devoted largely to talks in schools, clubs and libraries throughout the city, with the purpose of familiarizing as many types of people and kinds of organizations, as possible, with the Museum idea, and of arousing interest and enthusiasm in its direction. The exhibit extension work with libraries was begun, and plans for library and school co-operation well worked out.

Summer Work

The Summer work in the Museum was largely introductory in its character. The department was confronted by the problem of handling frequent and large groups of people who were absolutely unfamiliar with any museum. These came with no other idea than to see "the new building in Wade Park", and were often quite dazed by its size, and beauty. When possible such groups were met by a docent and given at least a slight point of contact with some phase of a collection. The attempt was not so much to give definite information as a conception of the way to approach the Museum. Talks of different characters were given to those coming with more specialized interests.

The Art School began to make use of the Museum almost immediately after its opening. Classes were brought by their instructors in order that they might become familiar with the possibilities offered by the various collections in the galleries, and individual students soon arrived, sketch book in hand. Classes from the Summer Normal School were held in the Museum and the Lecture Hall was used by them for lectures. A great many children came to the galleries. In some cases groups came once or twice a week asking for what they called "stories". This was parti-

cularly true of the small citizens of "Little Italy". By the Summer's end some of them had established real proprietary interest in the Museum.

Winter Activities - work with the adults

The Winter activities, resulting from the year of preparatory work, settled early in the Fall into fairly well defined channels. Classes and clubs of adults began meeting in the Conference Room. The only restriction placed upon such clubs was that they discuss an Art subject on the day of their meeting in the Museum. Altogether about 42 clubs have held meetings in the Museum, their aggregate attendance being 685. In some cases the programme was carried on by the club itself; in others a talk was given by a member of the Museum staff. In addition to work with clubs, groups have been conducted through the galleries during the Winter in response to requests for such appointments. Gallery talks have been held on Sunday afternoons from October to the middle of May. In these an attempt has been made to acquaint the public with the various types of collections in the Museum. The talks have been conducted by volunteer docents. The Museum is especially indebted to the Cleveland School of Art for its cordial co-operation in this direction. An informal connection has been made by the Museum with the College for Women. During the Winter students from classes in Mediaeval History came for talks on the art of that period. Classes in English have drawn inspiration for daily themes from the Sunday afternoon gallery talks. Also students from the French Department have come with their instructors for talks in French on Rodin and the Luxembourg exhibits.

Winter Activities - work with children

The main channel for work with children has been the result of school co-operation. Early in the Fall a statement was sent throughout the schools under the joint signatures of the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of the Museum, authorizing principals to send pupils to the Museum during school hours. As a result about 266 classes have come for work with history, geography, English, etc. Often classes have come simply "to see the Museum". In the latter case

a definite group of material was selected, often by the children themselves, for a gallery talk. The collections most used have been the armor, the Egyptian and the tapestry. The classical material in the rotunda has proved of great value. The picture galleries have been little used by the schools, as the demand from teachers in this field has been surprisingly slight. The oriental department is also largely an undiscovered country.

In addition to talks in the Galleries, there has been from the first a number of classes from the grades and high schools drawing in the Museum. The grade school work was organized the first part of the year by Miss Helen Fliedner, Supervisor of Drawing in the Public Schools. One class a day is sent to the Museum for a drawing lesson from Museum material. The lesson is given by one of the four district supervisors in the presence of the class teacher. Sixth and seventh grades work with pottery forms; the eighth grade with textiles. The children are given a preliminary talk in the class room on the material they are to draw from and after the drawing lesson is over are shown objects in the Museum following up the class room work. In connection with textiles the tapestries are shown to the children. The pottery used in the drawing lesson is largely primitive and leads naturally to the examples of primitive pottery in the galleries - the Egyptian and early Cypriote.

Lectures

During the Winter a series of lectures has been held for members of the Museum. Lectures open to the public have also been given under the joint auspices of the Museum and such organizations as the McBride Lecture Fund, and the Principals and School Arts Club, the Geographical Society, etc. Special evenings have been devoted to groups from the H. Black Co., Cleveland Trust Club, East Technical High School, Halle Brothers, etc. There has been a series of Saturday afternoon programmes for children. They have been open to all children of school age, and have proved popular at times to a somewhat overwhelming degree. In these programmes the department has boldly attacked the problem of moving pictures in their relation

to educational work. This has been done at times at the expense of a real connection with material in the galleries. The experiment was tried with the idea of finding out what possibilities the field offers and how to use the little material now available, and has proved to be a valuable addition to the year's work. However, the afternoons have by no means been confined to such experiments, and more and more the Museum connection has become the controlling feature.

Extension Work

Before the opening of the Museum a series of exhibits was prepared for the Branch Libraries. These exhibits consist of material of two types; that which leads back to the Art Museum and that which connects more directly with the Children's Museum, a development still in the future. There is a need at present for more art material, in order to keep the chief emphasis at that point. The exhibits are accompanied by diaries descriptive of the material and its background, and by a map and mounts showing the country of which the objects are the product. When the exhibits are installed the children gather around the case and are given an informal talk about the material. This co-operation with the libraries has shown itself to have such possibilities that a new member of the staff has recently been appointed to take charge of this work.

Outside Co-operation

The spirit of the Educational Department during this first year has been largely that of an experimental station. What it has actually been able to accomplish has been due to the cordial co-operation met on all sides. The department especially wishes to express its sincere appreciation of the responsive attitude shown by the Superintendent, Supervisors, Principals, and Teachers of the Public Schools, and of the generous service rendered it by the staff of the Cleveland Public Library. The work of the Educational Department has been the work of all of the departments in the Museum, so unstintingly has the entire staff given of its time and strength.

Statistics

Exhibit	Exhibits in Libraries and Schools	
Extension	Nov. 1, 1915 - June 1, 1917 (Winter only).....	
Work	In constant use.....	10
	Assembled in response to special needs.....	5
	Installations.....	93
	Numbers addressed on subject of said exhibits, approximately..	2190
Clubs	Clubs meeting in Museum since September 1916.....	42
	Aggregate Attendance.....	685
Classes from	Classes working in Museum since September 1916.....	351
Schools	Aggregate Attendance.....	8434
Docent	Sunday Gallery talks - 30 weeks	
Service	Average attendance	890
	Only taken of those who remained through the entire talk.	
	Week day docent service since June 7, 1916.....	9445
	Total Docent Attendance.....	10,335
Saturday	Children's Programmes	
Programmes	Oct. 28, 16 - April 28, 17	
for	Attendance.....	7580
Children		
Lectures for		
Adults	Adult lectures (44 lectures) Attendance	9453
Total		
Lecture		
Attendance	Children and Adult.....	16,933

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Emily Gibson (?)
Acting Assistant in charge
of Educational Work.

File

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

LECTURES FOR THE SEASON, 1918-1919

MONDAY EVENINGS:

15 lectures by Henry Turner Bailey on "The Appreciation of Beauty"
Attendance 5056, average 337

X WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS:

11 lectures by Henry Turner Bailey and Thomas Whitney Surette on "The Appreciation of Art and Music". Especially for Normal School and College Students. Attendance 2221, Average 202.

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS:

a. 6 lectures by Henry Turner Bailey on the "History of Art"
Attendance 1860 , Average 310

X b. 8 lectures by Thomas Whitney Surette on "The Appreciation of Music". Attendance 1975, Average 249

c. 7 lectures on "Styles in Home Building," by various speakers
Attendance 1505, Average 215

d. 5 lectures on Miscellaneous subjects
Attendance 1289, Average 258

FRIDAY EVENINGS:

X 2 lectures by Thomas Whitney Surette, as an experiment, but remaining lectures in this series cancelled on account of change in Mr. Surette's schedule

A total of 54 lectures, with an attendance of 14,089 and an average attendance of 261.